



“We introduced the text message option to break down voter enrolment barriers. They can now kick their enrolment off with little hassle or delay.”

Murray Wicks, National Manager,  
Electoral Enrolment Centre

Case Study  
**Electoral Enrolment  
Centre**

## Making votes count – Datasquirt helps reduce enrolment apathy thanks to SMS solution

A staggering 51% of all enrolment requests received by the Electoral Enrolment Centre, prior to the New Zealand 2005 general election were processed via a text messaging solution deployed by multi-channel communication expert Datasquirt.

Datasquirt was asked to deploy a contact centre solution that would help attract more voters by targeting enrolments from traditionally hard to reach groups, including those who had just turned 18, those who had moved house recently and people for whom English was a second language.

The Electoral Enrolment Centre needed an SMS contact centre solution capable of handling very high volumes of consumer contact in short time frames, which could also support back-office processing in multiple service bureaus across different locations.

Datasquirt configured and deployed its multi-channel call centre software CONTACT™, a solution that processes and queues inbound and outbound text messages using a call centre's existing business processes.

The hosted system ran off centralised servers and was accessed via a secure internet connection allowing the Electoral Enrolment Centre to significantly reduce costs and set up time as its call centre bureaus did not need to install new software or hardware.

During the enrolment period, inbound SMS contacts were delivered to agents directly via the CONTACT solution for review and processing. Detailed real-time reports outlining contacts and traffic analysis (for workforce management forecasting and rostering) were made available. In addition, the CONTACT solution provided a full colour-coded contact history for each customer.

As a result of the Datasquirt solution, the Electoral Enrolment Centre generated a significant improvement in the number of enrolment requests it received prior to the election. The centre received 72% more requests to enrol in the first two weeks of the project when compared with the 2002 campaign.

Over 50 percent of all enrolment requests were received via SMS, despite all consumers having the choice of an 0800 phone number, an internet / email service, and a freepost mail service.

When compared with 2002, consumer usage of the mail and phone channels was about the same. But, the web / email channel usage was down in 2005 by a significant 80 percent as consumers took

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advantage of the more convenient SMS option.

The response to the SMS channel was unprecedented and the volumes of contacts received were far greater than envisaged, so much so that the Electoral Enrolment Centre was required to contract additional out-sourced contact centre bureaus to cope with the customer demand.

Based on the results of the 2005 voter registration campaign, the New Zealand Government has firmly established the SMS channel as the preferred mainstream communication choice for the general public. The Electoral Enrolment Centre was thrilled with the results and the CONTACT solution is marked down as a key tool for all future election campaigns.

### Key solution features / benefits

- CONTACT was deployed as an 'on-demand' hosted solution allowing the client to cope with extra demand easily. Each new site was able to deploy the solution in minutes with agents accessing the solution using web browsers over the internet
- The solution allowed the contact centre to queue and process real-time two-way SMS contacts with detailed reporting and KPI metrics (grade of service, wait times, handle times, etc)
- While consumer usage of the SMS channel was high, the set-up and running of CONTACT was not. The average cost per customer contact was up to 80 percent cheaper to process via SMS than via voice
- An SMS offering stimulates customers to act faster than other channels such as voice and email. Contact volumes were up 72 percent in the first two weeks of the campaign when compared with the 2002 general election

### About the Electoral Enrolment Centre

The Electoral Enrolment Centre maintains electoral rolls and conducts the Maori Electoral Option. The centre is a self-contained business unit of New Zealand Post Ltd, under contract to the Minister of Justice. The centre has a team of Registrars of Electors – one for each electorate. The Registrars are responsible for compiling and maintaining the electoral rolls for their electorate. As well as maintaining the electoral rolls on a daily basis and conducting enrolment update campaigns prior to all major electoral events, the Registrars also work in their local communities to encourage eligible electors to enrol.

“Thousands of extra requests for enrolment forms came to us. We more than doubled the number of people wanting enrolment forms in the first fortnight of the Enrolment Update Campaign, and it was all because of text messaging.”

Murray Wicks, National Manager,  
Electoral Enrolment Centre

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or visit us at [www.datasquirt.com](http://www.datasquirt.com)